

The Oklahoma Publisher

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Mark and Rusty were back on the road this month. Read Rusty's report about the newspapers they visited.

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OPA opposes tax on subscribers

An Oklahoma senator has proposed a new tax on every subscriber to a newspaper or magazine.

Sen. Jim Wilson, D-Tahlequah, filed SB 1098 and issued a statement that his intent is to fund teacher bonuses.

OPA Executive Vice President Mark Thomas says OPA opposes the new tax on every newspaper subscriber for several reasons.

"As the son of two school teachers I don't have a problem with rewarding teachers for their extra effort and education," Thomas said. "However, taxing speech and newspaper readers is not the proper way to accomplish that goal.

"Newspapers serve as a watchdog on behalf of citizens. Newspaper readers are just citizens trying to keep up with their government, schools and

community. The bill is like taxing my dog every time she barks."

Thomas also said a majority of subscription revenue merely covers the cost of shipping or postage.

"Postage and shipping are not taxable and if we just called it what it really is there would be no tax revenue at all. That is a fundamental misunderstanding about subscription charges."

Thomas said he will work with tax commission officials to help them understand the newspaper industry.

"They have a very difficult job at the OTC and we are willing to work with them. But, it doesn't take long for an original estimate made in 1995, multiplied by an inflation factor, to get out of sync with reality."

In 1995 the tax commission contracted with an economist group to review every tax exemption. By 2008 the original estimate had grown exponentially to \$13 million in revenue and somehow the revenue estimate was \$17 million in 2010.

"I know it didn't increase that much, and I think when we have the opportunity to work through the details with the OTC, the estimate will be much, much lower," said Thomas.

"Even if the state could generate revenue by taxing newspaper readers, they should not do so," Thomas said.

"We think elected officials and leaders in all three branches of government understand this basic American principle."

Plan to attend the OPA Legislative Summit



Save the date of Feb. 9, 2012, for the OPA Legislative Summit.

That's the day all OPA members are encouraged to meet at the State Capitol to discuss legal notices, taxation on advertising and taxation of circulation.

With these important issues being discussed and debated, it's important that your legislator knows your position.

You'll also have the opportunity to hear from statewide elected officials, including Governor Mary Fallin.

"When you go to the capitol your legislator knows you mean business," said Jeff

Mayo, co-publisher of the Sequoyah County Times and chairman of the OPA Government Relations Committee.

"Our political enemies make regular trips to the capitol. You need to be at this summit!"

Registration is free but please let us know you're coming.

Download a registration form in PDF format or register online at okpress.com/legislative-summit.

The summit, which is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., includes lunch in the Capitol Rotunda.

More information will be distributed prior to the event.

New look for Oklahoma Publisher

You might notice a few changes to this issue of The Oklahoma Publisher.

The former design was introduced in February 1997 and, with the exception of a few minor changes, has remained virtually the same.

For several months we've been looking for inspiration from papers across the state and country, checking out fonts and tweaking designs.

In the end we opted for a design facelift instead of extensive reconstructive surgery.

The flag has been updated with new type and a faded map of pre-statehood Oklahoma for a bit of history.

We also changed the headline type and chose a more spacious and readable body copy.

We even tweaked the masthead and staff directory.

Though the face might have changed a bit, we are still doing our best to keep you up-to-date on what's happening with OPA member newspapers and the industry, what's happening at the Capitol and offering advice on how to put out a better publication.

Let us know what you think of the new look on our Facebook page or email your comments to news@okpress.com.

TIME OUT

OPA PRESIDENT'S COLUMN
BY RUSTY FERGUSON, PUBLISHER OF THE CLEVELAND AMERICAN

I don't know about you, but I'm all revved up for the new year! And all it took to get me that way were a Disney movie, my three sons and popcorn!

Regardless of how old they are, there are moments along the way that always bring a smile as I'm reminded that my children will always be kids at heart. Home from OU on their Christmas break, one recent evening I found my three sons sprawled out in the den preparing to watch one of their favorite movies, Cars.

While I had seen bits and pieces of the Disney-Pixar hit since it entered our library of DVDs, I had never taken the time to sit down and enjoy it from start to finish. So, no better time than the present, I thought, to enjoy a movie and some quality time with my sons. So Cars and popcorn it was.

I readily admit I enjoyed the movie. I was impressed with the life lessons underscored in the film, and appreciated the focus the film's creators gave to struggles of small town life.

LESSON NO. 1: APPRECIATE THE CREW.

Hotshot rookie race car Lightning McQueen is living life in the fast lane and is overflowing with self-pride. He thinks he's a one-car show and the support he receives from his pit crew and others can easily be dismissed as he sees it as secondary to his own abilities. It's clear that Lightning needs a lesson in teamwork!

The reminder for me: Watching a

completed edition of our newspaper roll off the press is often akin to the feeling of crossing the finish line – especially on those occasions when making deadline came after what seemed like a long and bumpy road. For me to proudly flip through the pages and take full credit for another edition would be foolish as I'm well aware of just how that paper gets in the hands of our readers – and that is thanks to the efforts of a talented “pit crew” that needs to be appreciated.

LESSON NO. 2: REALIZE EQUIPMENT NEEDS ATTENTION.

In one particularly amusing scene, Lightning McQueen is determined to make it to the finish line without stopping long enough to make an upgrade. Convinced he can complete the job as is, he takes lap after lap on borrowed time. His tires blow out just before the checkered flag waves and he struggles to cross the finish line on nothing but fumes and rims, completely exhausted.

The reminder for me: Expecting my team to use the same old equipment, issue after issue, year after year, sometimes makes it difficult to get the job done. Yes, there have been days when it seems like the printer has a flat tire and steam is puffing out of the computer as it clunks along to get the job done. Nothing duct tape can't fix, right? Just imagine the results adequate maintenance and upgrades can make along the way!

LESSON NO. 3: APPRECIATE EXPERIENCE.

Lightning meets one tough ol' coot in the character of Doc, who he eventually discovers is actually a three-time Piston Cup winner who was forced out of racing after an accident and quickly forgotten by the sport. In the end, he is Lightning's biggest fan and helps him along with all kinds of sage advice.

Reminder for me: In a time of amazing life-changing technology, I don't want to overlook those who have “been there...done that.” Many “old-timers” are still around and we can learn from their experiences. Be it right here in my hometown, or in this industry, I can learn from those who have gone before me. Seeking the advice of others is not a sign of weakness, but a display of common sense.

LESSON NO. 4: MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Hitting a detour on his way to the big race, Lightning McQueen finds himself stranded in the forgotten town of Radiator Springs, located along the old Route 66. Here he meets a variety of quirky characters who eventually become his friends and support team. Amazed at what Radiator Springs once was, Lightning ends up investing himself in the town to help it once again become a thriving community.

Reminder for me: Get out of neutral. Newspapers should be the hub of excitement in any given community. We should be the ones organizing efforts to make our town the gateway to a good life. If people are driving by without even knowing we are on the map, we need to let them know what they're missing. We need to be the ones leading out and extending efforts to help pave the way to brighter days.

THE POINT AFTER

“It's about the journey, not the finish line.”

– Lightning McQueen

State AG reminds police chiefs of Open Records law

State Attorney General Scott Pruitt has written a letter to the Oklahoma Association of Chiefs of Police instructing them to comply with the state Open Records law.

“The state Legislature has made it clear in this regard that a police department's initial offense report or cover should be open for public inspection, regardless of its inclusion in an investigation,” Pruitt wrote in his letter.

This does not mean the actual report has to be released, just initial information relating to the report.

Freedom of Information Oklahoma, Inc. and Oklahoma State University professor Joey Senat had asked Pruitt for help after Edmond police refused to release details about an investigation into Assistant Fire Chief Tim Wheeler.

Media members and citizens also complained about police departments

withholding information during Open Meeting and Open Records Acts seminars held by attorney general officials, Pruitt stated in the letter.

Edmond police officials did finally release information relating to the Wheeler investigation, but only after The Oklahoman published stories about the Edmond Police Department's violation of the Open Records Act.



JAN. 23, 2012

DEADLINE FOR ANNUAL CONTEST ENTRIES

Contest entries must be postmarked by Monday, Jan. 23, 2012, for the Better Newspaper Contest, Website Contest, Print Quality Contest and the Outdoor Writer of the Year Award. For more information, visit okpress.com/awards.

FEB. 9, 2012, Oklahoma City, OK OPA LEGISLATIVE DAY AT STATE CAPITOL

All OPA members are encouraged to meet at the State Capitol on Thursday, Feb. 9, to discuss issues with statewide elected officials and House and Senate members. Members will discuss proposed legislation and issues of concern to every Oklahoma newspaper. Check okpress.com/legislative-summit for updates.

THU., FEB. 23, OKLAHOMA CITY GET OPINIONATED

Learn to write award-winning columns in a workshop led by Journal Record editor and opinion writer Ted Streuli. Streuli will help you get comfortable speaking your mind on local issues, pop culture and personal experiences. If you're going to write an editorial or column, you need to attend this workshop. Of course, that's just our opinion. Registration \$35. For more information or to register, visit okpress.com/events-calendar.

THU., MARCH 15, OKC LEGAL LAND MINES

Every fact could be correct in a story, but reporting methods or how a story is represented can lead to cases that blow up in a reporter's face. OPA Legal Services Plan attorneys Mike Minnis and David McCullough will show you how to find a safe path through legal land mines in issues such as taped conversations, advertising, privacy and the Internet. Registration \$35. For more information or to register, visit okpress.com/events-calendar

For more information on upcoming events, visit the OPA website at www.OkPress.com or contact Member Services Director Lisa Potts at (405) 499-0026, 1-888-815-2672 or e-mail LPotts@okpress.com.

Thieves take coupons from Guymon Herald

The Guymon Daily Herald is fighting back against newspaper rack theft.

To catch the thieves, the Herald has installed anti-theft devices and security monitoring systems to random racks – and will soon have them safeguarding all racks.

Peggy Martinez, Herald circulation manager, said she has seen an increase of the number of newspapers stolen from racks with the largest amount of papers being taken on the weekend.

In addition to newspapers being stolen, complaints are also on the rise, Martinez said.

“People are not just stealing the newspapers anymore, but taking all the coupons out of the newspapers and leaving the papers in the rack,” she said.

When the next person stops to buy the paper and finds the coupons are missing, he’s angry.

Martinez blames this upward trend of coupon stealing on a popular television show depicting couponers who have discovered retail secrets of couponing.

Extreme couponers search newspapers, the Internet and even dumpster dive for coupons and match them to in-store discounts in the area.

Allison Gipe, general manager of the Herald, encouraged prospective thieves to think it through before proceeding with the crime.

“Even just taking the coupons is stealing and we will prosecute,” she said.

Enid News & Eagle editor says goodbye

Cindy Allen recently left her position as editor of the Enid News & Eagle to relocate to Oklahoma City with her husband.

Allen served as editor of the News & Eagle for more than nine years.

In a goodbye column, Allen looked back at how much Enid had changed in nearly 10 years, adding, “I think most of those changes have been positive.”

New look for Grove Sun

On Friday, Jan. 6, The Grove Sun unveiled its newly redesigned paper.

Designers David Hoover and Cody Dyer, who have been designing front page graphics at The Sun, led the project.

The Sun changed the look of its flag, switching from Old English style type to a more modern, serif font while keeping the sun graphic.

The redesign offers readers more graphics, features and columns and ties in more with The Sun’s online offering, www.grandlakenews.com.

The Grand Lake Weekend Section also has been redesigned and reformatted. Prior to the redesign, the Weekend Section was full-size with little color. It is now a full-color, tabular section.

These design and formatting changes are the first for The Sun in 20 years, aside from a period when the paper was known as the Grove Sun Daily, from 1999 to 2009.

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INSIDE TODAY
12 pages in 4 sections
7 hours

PUSHED BACK

Revenue funds removed from fiscal budget

\$145,900

Littlefield happy to be involved

The Grove Sun debuted its new look on Jan. 6, which includes a redesigned flag.

O'Colly app now available in iTunes

The Daily O'Collegian, Oklahoma State University's student newspaper, recently announced the launch of the O'Colly smartphone and tablet application.

The O'Colly partnered with OPUBCO, the parent company to The Oklahoman and NewsOk.com, to create the app in Ditto, a CMS created by OPUBCO.

“We’re really excited to offer this app to our students, faculty and staff absolutely free,” O'Colly adviser Barbara Allen said. “This has been months in the making, and we feel like we’ve

got a great partner and one of the best-looking newspaper apps in the nation.”

According to the O'Collegian, the app is the first college newspaper available through iTunes Newsstand, and is believed to be the first college newspaper app in the nation specifically for iPad, though it also works with all smartphones and tablets.

The app is available in iTunes and searchable under “ocollegian.”

Users logging in with an okstate.edu email address receive unlimited access. Non OSU-users can purchase a subscription for \$10 a year.

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Tulsa World finds EMSA names match those of felons

The names of more than 100 convicted felons match those of paramedics and medical technicians working for the Emergency Medical Services Authority, the Tulsa World reported on Jan. 8 in an article by Ziva Branstetter.

However, the agency has no way to know which names, if any, actually have criminal histories.

EMSA uses a private contractor, Paramedics Plus, to hire employees, maintain the records and perform background checks. EMSA knows the names of employees who drive its ambulances, but does not have job applications, records of disciplinary actions or documents containing dates of birth.

Last year, Paramedics Plus hired a

medical technician with a DUI on his record. After he was involved in a fatal accident while driving an EMSA ambulance, he was charged with negligent homicide and fired.

The Tulsa World requested full names, dates of birth, job applications, disciplinary actions and other identifying information from EMSA on paramedics and EMTs following the Dec. 10 fatal accident in Oklahoma City.

EMSA provided first and last names, hire dates and medical license numbers for 518 employees of Paramedics Plus, but refused to provide other information, saying its employees' information is private and not subject to the Open Records Act. It also refused to provide

ages, middle initials or partial dates of birth to the World.

The World matched the employees' first and last names with a Department of Corrections database of convicted felons and found 109 that matched. Without dates of birth and other identifying information, there is no way to tell how many of the employees, if any, are felons.

Kris Koepsel, an attorney representing EMSA, said the agency's contract with Paramedics Plus does not require it to comply with the open records law. He cited a recent Oklahoma Supreme Court decision regarding public employees' dates of birth as among the reasons to withhold the information.

Owasso agrees to release police officer video to family

Owasso city officials recently agreed to provide police officer lapel camera video and audio materials requested by the family of a Tulsa man who died Oct. 27 in the Tulsa County jail.

The agreement to provide the materials came just as the parents of the deceased had filed an open records lawsuit against Owasso in Tulsa County District Court.

The parents of the deceased prisoner had submitted an open records request to the Owasso Police Depart-

ment on Nov. 8 but were denied access to certain materials.

The open records lawsuit documents show that Scott B. Wood, a Tulsa lawyer representing Owasso, on Dec. 14 sent Corey Miner, the attorney of the deceased's parents, a letter offering access to an arrest report, a radio log and a computer-aided dispatch report, but not to video or audio materials.

"The remaining materials requested by you in your letter of Nov. 8, 2011, are in my opinion outside the scope of

documents you are entitled to under the Open Records Act," Wood wrote to Miner.

On Dec. 15, Miner asked Wood to cite the "specific statutory language" he had used to make a determination regarding which requested materials would not be released.

On Dec. 20, Owasso city attorney Julie Lombardi confirmed that the Owasso municipal government had agreed to provide all materials requested by the family.

CPI renames news division Neighbor News

Community Publishers Inc. officially changed the name of its news division that operates in three states to Neighbor News.

Formerly Neighbor Newspapers, the name change better reflects the company's commitment to deliver news and information in multiple formats.

"We are firmly committed to delivering local news and information in a way our customers want to receive it," Neighbor News publisher Mike Brown said.

"The print product is not going away because our customers want it. At the same time, our online products continue to grow in readership year over year, so the name Neighbor News is simply designed to more accurately reflect what we do."

Neighbor News operates in Oklahoma, Missouri and Arkansas. The print products are run on Neighbor News printing presses and are delivered to households each week. The majority of the newspapers are published weekly.

Community Publishers Incorporated has been committed to serving local communities for over a quarter century.

OPA launches Content Exchange area

Have you ever found yourself in this situation: It's deadline and you need to fill a hole in your paper. You wish there was somewhere you could go to find content – good content relevant to your readers.

Now you can look through material in the Content Exchange area of the Oklahoma Press Association's website to see if there's something suitable.

The section, which launched on Jan. 4, 2012, is located in a password-protected area where member newspapers can exchange columns, features and editorials. Only participating newspapers that are members of the OPA are able to access the area.

In addition to the exchange content, you'll also find an area titled 'Advertising Ideas' where you can look at great designs and promotions to get your own creativity flowing.

There's also quotes from Will Rogers, provided by the Will Rogers Memorial Museum.

If you aren't one of the 55 OPA members who have already signed up, it's not too late. Just download the form at www.okpress.com/content-exchange and fax it back to us at (405) 499-0048. Once you have your name and password, you can log on to see what's available.

You're free to use any of the shared columns, features or editorials

in your own print publication simply by giving the originating newspaper and author a byline. Don't forget to give back by sending in your own editorials, columns and features (and photos that go with the features) to content@okpress.com.

All submissions are reviewed before being posted and will be available for 120 days after posting.

Access to the content exchange is free for business members; sustaining members pay a \$60 annual fee.

For more information about the Content Exchange area or questions, contact Jennifer Gilliland at (405) 499-0028 or email jgilliland@okpress.com.

Former Ardmoreite staffer returns as city editor

Debbie Sander has rejoined the staff of The Ardmoreite in Ardmore as city reporter.

She was living in Colorado with her husband and son when the opportunity to return to Ardmore presented itself.

Sander formerly served as a copy editor at the newspaper.

She graduated from the University of Central Oklahoma in 2001. After working at a television station in Oklahoma City, she moved to Ardmore in 2004 to work as a copy editor.

Sander said she is excited about her new position at the newspaper and an opportunity to make a difference.

DEATHS

MANDELL MATHESON, journalist, legislator and lobbyist, died at his home in Tulsa on Dec. 10, 2011. He was 73.

Matheson began his journalism career as a newspaper photographer while attending Capitol Hill High School in Oklahoma City.

In 1968, after serving in the Marine Corps and time spent working as an Oklahoma Highway Patrol Trooper, Matheson returned to newspapers with a job at the Tulsa Tribune.

He earned praise for his reporting on pollution by oil companies throughout the state and was eventually assigned to the Tribune's Capitol bureau.

In 1972, Matheson left reporting on the Capitol to work in it. He ran for the District 72 House seat as a Democrat and upset a 14-year veteran.

He served three terms in the House and rose to assistant majority floor leader.

He was known as a reformer during his time in office, helping to explore penal reforms after a prison riot in McAlester, sponsoring a bond issue reform bill and various other actions.

He eschewed a fourth term, for which he would have been almost certainly re-elected, having felt that he had burnt out on serving in the legislature.

After his time in the legislature he worked as human resources director for Sooner Pipe and Supply and later became a legislative consultant.

During his time as a lobbyist he helped convince lawmakers to create Children First, a state Health Department program that teaches expectant mothers how to care for themselves and their children.

He is survived by his wife of 26 years, Karen Matheson; three brothers, Jerry, David and Phillip Matheson, and one sister, Gayle Watkins.

ROBERTA JEAN PARKER, a longtime Broken Arrow journalist and historian, died Jan. 1, 2012. She was 78.

Parker was born in Worth County, Mo., on Sept. 27, 1933.

She attended the University of Missouri School of Journalism, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree.

Parker and her husband, James D. Parker, moved their family to Broken Arrow in 1963.

During her time in Broken Arrow, Parker became an authority on all facets of Broken Arrow history.

Her award-winning newspaper column, "Cornerstones," for which she received recognition from the Oklahoma State Historical Society, examined different aspects of Broken Arrow history every week. "Cornerstones" appeared in the Broken Arrow Scout

and later the Broken Arrow Ledger, until publishing and space constrictions in the Ledger forced the column's end.

Along with her newspaper column, Parker wrote many scholarly articles about Oklahoma's Indian Territory communities and recently authored "The Complete History of Broken Arrow Fire Department."

She was the primary author of the 2002 "Centennial Edition" of the Broken Arrow Ledger, which chronicled the history of every major segment of industry, business, organizations, churches, government and activities from Broken Arrow's start to its modern day.

During Broken Arrow's Centennial year, Broken Arrow residents were asked to nominate the "100 Outstanding Citizens of the Century." Parker

assumed the responsibility of authoring biographical stories for each of the 100 outstanding citizens.

Parker was a member of the Broken Arrow Church of Christ for 48 years. She was a community service volunteer for the Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce, as well as a member of several other community organizations.

Parker is survived by her husband, James Parker; three sons and their spouses, Nathan Parker of Miami, Fla., Reece and Holly Parker of Broken Arrow, and Joel and Linda Parker of Edmond; two daughters and their spouses, Jeanne and Allan Lay of Owasso, and Hannah and Jim Hoffmeister of Broken Arrow; one sister, Freida Jennings Roberts; 13 grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

ROBERT H. 'BOB' SCULLY, former co-owner of the Henryetta Daily Free Lance and publisher of the Okmulgee County News, Okemah News Leader, Weleetka American and Choctaw Suburban Sun, died Dec. 18, 2011. He was 87.

Scully was born in Camden, New Jersey, and later attended high school in Sabattus, Maine.

He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and was discharged in 1946.

That same year he met his wife, Jo Ann, who was his partner in the newspaper business.

Scully graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 1951 with a degree in journalism.

He was preceded in death by his wife.

He is survived by his children, Henry Patrick Scully of Choctaw, Linda Jo Geier of Tulsa, and Robert Clyde and Carol Scully of Edmond; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

BETTY WATSON, former Yukon Review publisher, died Jan. 6, 2012. She was 87.

Betty was born on Aug. 29, 1924, to John and Nyssa Classen. She spent her entire life in the Oklahoma City, Bethany and Yukon area.

She was a graduate of Southern

Nazarene University, where she met her husband James (Jim) Watson. The two were married July 8, 1947.

In 1963, Jim and Betty started the Yukon Review and were its publishers for 20 years. Betty was preceded in death by her husband in 1986.

She is survived by her four children, Ron Watson of Kansas City; Dennis Watson of Yukon; Susan Downs of North Richland Hills, Texas, and Shelley Spearman of Edmond; and 12 grandchildren.

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A donation to the Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation will support its efforts to improve the state's newspaper industry and quality of journalism.

ONF's programs include training and education for professional journalists, scholarship and internship programs for journalism students, and Newspaper in Education efforts.

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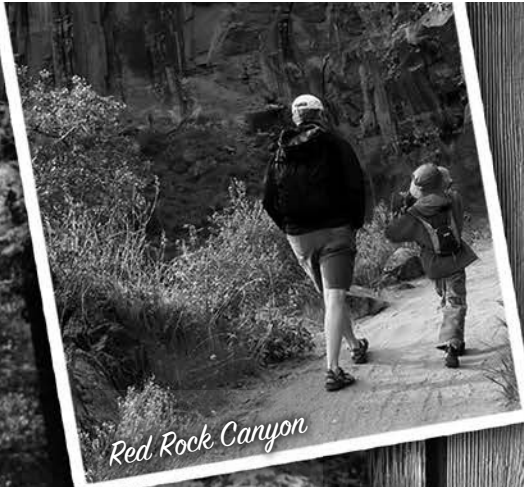
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Roman Nose



Newcastle Pacer sold to Montgomerys, Dyers

On Jan. 5, Tri-City Publishing Inc. announced that it had completed purchase of the Newcastle Pacer from the Chickasaw Nation.

New owners of the Pacer are John D. and Gracie Montgomery of Purcell, and Ray Dyer and Sean Dyer of El Reno. The Montgomerys are owners and publishers of The Purcell Register; the Dyers own and publish the El Reno Tribune and Mustang News.

Brett Jones, general manager of the Mustang News, was named publisher of the Pacer.

"We are a company committed to high-quality community journalism," Jones said.

"We believe The Pacer has a track record of service to this community, and we want to build on that. Newcastle

is a growing community and being part of that is exciting."

Readers will notice some changes in the coming weeks, said Jones.

The Pacer has added Matt Montgomery as a full-time sports editor for all Newcastle athletics.

"Sports is a big part of the identity of any community," Jones said.

Along with an increased focus on sports, The Pacer plans to ramp up its coverage of county news and have an active editorial page where issues can be aired.

"We believe in being a strong advocate for our readers," Jones said. "That is the first role of any newspaper. I welcome people to come by the office and talk with me. I am really looking forward to getting to meet residents."

PLAYER PROFILE



Name: **IDA K. ROBERTS,**
PUBLISHER,
THE FAIRFAX CHIEF

CHILDREN: Two daughters: Roxanne, HR Manager, Albuquerque, NM; Carrie, senior at Oklahoma Wesleyan University, Bartlesville

NEWSPAPER EXPERIENCE: Started as part-time employee at The Fairfax Chief in February 1996, purchased The Chief in September 2001.

Q: What's the best part of your job?

A: All of it!

Q: What civic activities are you involved in?

A: Chamber of Commerce; Hospital Advisory Board.

Q: Who's had the biggest influence on your career?

A: Peggy Whitt Asher, high school journalism teacher.

Q: What would you describe as the three most important responsibilities of your job?

A: Timeliness, being objective and accepting.

Q: What about newspaper publishing gets you out of bed in the morning? What makes you want to stay in bed?

A: Getting the paper finished. Not crazy about staying in bed.

Q: What's the biggest obstacle you've overcome in your career?

A: Overcoming 29 years working for the federal government and learning to work in the REAL world.

Q: What are you most proud of?

A: My daughters.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Reading, some needlework.

Q: Does your newspaper have a website?

A: No – technology is not as great as it's cracked up to be.

Q: How does your newspaper play an important part in the community?

A: Providing local news as opposed to repeating news found in every major media source.

Q: What type of annual events is your newspaper involved in?

A: Chamber events, annual Angel Tree.

Q: In what ways has the newspaper positively impacted your community?

A: Helps keep small rural communities alive.

Q: What challenges are facing your newspaper today and in the future?

A: Technology and the lack of the human touch.

Q: What are some area attractions in your community visitors shouldn't miss?

A: Fairfax Lake is excellent for bass fishing.

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SCHOLARS VISIT 50 NEWSPAPERS

BY LISA L. ROLLINS, Guest Contributor

In today's technology-driven world, some may think broadcast or online news is all that's needed versus the traditional hard-copy newspaper that many of us, including me, grew up cherishing.

However, thanks to a recent year-long-plus study by two reporters – Paul Steinle, a veteran broadcaster and former UPI president, and Sara Brown, Ph.D. – it's clear that the tenure of the hard-copy newspaper is far from over.

Husband-and-wife Brown and Steinle presented the findings of their research in late September at the Excellence in Journalism conference in New Orleans at a session titled "Transformational Newspapers: Newspapers in 2011."

Intrigued by what I learned during that session, I took some of their findings back to my own undergraduate journalism classrooms at Langston University and sought to learn more about the pair's self-initiated research that has been organized and documented online at WhoNeedsNewspapers.org, a website created by Valid Sources, a 501(c)(3) devoted to supporting journalists.

As it turns out, sharing their research has been the easy part for Steinle and Brown because nobody wanted to fund their research – at least not in the beginning. Thus, like all determined journalists, where there's a will, there's a way, so the focused reporters paid their own way, as they set out to visit newspapers in 48 states after buying a 31-foot Cougar fifth-wheel travel trailer and a Chevrolet Silverado 2500 diesel pickup.

When all was said and done, they'd logged 31,000 miles across 48 states, from June 2010 through July 2011 and stayed in 70 RV parks along the way – with side trips via air to newspapers in Anchorage, Alaska, and Kauai, Hawaii.

What follows is my post-conference Q&A with Steinle about the "Who Needs Newspapers?" research, which offers a much-welcomed forecast for traditional newspapers and those who create them.

Q: *What prompted this newspaper study and the subsequent creation of Valid Sources?*

STEINLE: I've had a long interest

in the role of newspapers in gathering and reporting the news. I had been a broadcaster for nearly 30 years when I became the president of UPI in 1988.

During my tenure at UPI (1988-1990), I interacted with many newspaper executives and visited many newspapers. I was impressed by the depth of the commitment to gathering and reporting the news in newspaper companies. In broadcasting companies, gathering and delivering news is about 10-15 percent of what the business does, but at newspapers the entire organizations seemed more committed and involved in news gathering and news delivery. So, I found newspaper companies more news-driven than broadcasters (who also offer a lot of entertainment programming).

I was also impressed by the values of the people who owned newspapers, by their involvement with their communities, and by their dedication to professional ethically driven journalism.

Q: *Did your experience as a journalism educator play a role at all in wanting to do this research?*

STEINLE: When I started teaching in the School of Communication ... (at the University of Miami) in 1991, I constantly would hear that "newspapers are dying." Facing retirement 20 years later, the same refrain was being sung, but most newspapers still persisted.

In 2009, in planning a First Amendment Forum at Southern Oregon University (SOU) – an annual event – we decided to examine the role that newspapers play in informing a community about its life. In 2009, the new refrain was: "I get my news from the Internet;" so therefore the unspoken corollary was: "I don't need any newspaper any more."

That view seemed quite uninformed to us in the journalism program at SOU because we realized that most of the local news on the Internet came from local newspaper sources. So we decided to call our SOU First Amendment Forum event: "Who Needs Newspapers?" It was a purposely ironic title that suggests, in fact, that these newspapers are the key source for local information in most communities, but perhaps the community's citizens did not appreciate that.



Journalists Paul Steinle and his wife Sara Brown visited newspapers in all 50 states and reported their findings online at WhoNeedsNewspapers.org.

Q: *It wasn't until you retired that you were able to embark on this research, correct?*

STEINLE: When I retired as associate provost from SOU in 2010, my wife, Sara Brown, and I were looking for an interesting project. We had talked about driving around the USA, but we also wanted a mission to enhance that experience. At the same time, the "Newspapers are dying" folks were still beating their drums.

The beat in 2009-2010 had become louder because of the growth of the Internet and the financial problems of the newspaper industry. The problems were exemplified by The Tribune Co. and McClatchy Newspapers, which had taken on large debt loads and expanded just before the 2008 recession hit – a recession that by itself was clobbering all media that survived on advertising dollars, which included most periodicals and most newspapers.

Journalists apparently like to predict things. But most of the prediction stories reported seemed tied to The Tribune Co., McClatchy and a few other major-metro dailies.

What about the other 1,300-plus U.S.

daily newspapers? What was the story? In fact, we suspected a single business story could not explain what was happening in a complex industry like the newspaper business, which offers publications in many shapes and sizes.

So, we asked some friends with a similar curiosity about the future of newspapers to help us, and we formed a 501(c)(3) called Valid Sources to design and publish a report on the status of newspapers at this time. We decided to publish the report on a website – WhoNeedsNewspapers.org – and we set out to visit one newspaper in each state in the USA and tell the story about local newspapers with fresh reporting from the field.

(In Oklahoma, Steinle and Brown visited the Sequoyah County Times in Sallisaw.)

Q: *At the time of the Excellence in Journalism conference, I believe 48 states had been visited but not all of the research was on the website. What can those interested now find on the WNN website?*

STEINLE: The WhoNeedsNewspapers.org

50 newspapers

Continued from Page 8

pers.org website was posted on Sept. 23, 2010, with the first state report: Alaska. The 50th state report – North Dakota – was posted on Oct. 10, 2011. The website now has 50 reports from 50 newspapers, J-Epiphany from 100 newspaper people and nine Bonus Reports (interviews with industry experts and a visit to MinnPost.com).

Q: *Were the findings what was expected?*

STEINLE: The findings are to a great degree idiosyncratic. The findings vary from newspaper to newspaper. What we expected was that this is a complex dynamic industry and that is what we found.

Newspapers vary greatly in their approach to the challenges facing them. Each newspaper's size, its market, its financial resources, the values of its ownership and the skill of its leadership determine its status and direction. We visited newspapers that have been distinguished either for their general excellence or for their innovation. So, we did not encounter dying newspapers ensconced in hospice.

We visited newspapers that are thinking beyond the limits of their newsprint, presses and delivery routes. Most still call themselves newspapers or media companies, but are reconceptualizing themselves as multi-media, multi-platform news and information companies that deliver content through newsprint and new electronic Internet-connected channels.

Q: *What was most surprising about what you found?*

STEINLE: I guess what is most surprising is that so many people who write about these companies are not reporting on the aggressive steps many newspapers are taking to rethink and

perpetuate the unique information services they deliver to their communities.

Q: *Were any of the findings, for lack of a better word, comforting? I like knowing newspapers as we know them, meaning hard copy, have at least another 20 years, if not longer.*

STEINLE: What's "comforting" is the high degree of intelligence and the high level of commitment demonstrated by the 150 or so newspaper people to whom we talked. Our nation is fortunate that so many bright people, who are interested in observing their communities and reporting truthfully about their observations, are engaged in this field.

Only a handful of our 50 newspapers' newspaper people expect the death of newspapers in the near future. Most of them expect newspapers to persist "at least for the rest of my career." However, nearly all of them also recognize that news is also being distributed electronically, and that these new media channels also need to be employed with skill.

The conundrum in 2011 is that, digitally circulated, display advertising revenues alone can't finance quality local news operations. But, fortunately, there is still a significant portion of most communities who want their news delivered in the traditional newsprint package, with its unique characteristics of portability and random-access, and with the benefits of the contemplative nature of its presentation.

So, it's probably a reasonable bet that newspapers will persist for at least another 20 years. And perhaps they will endure longer if their unique qualities are valued in an otherwise Twittering future.

Lisa L. Rollins, Ph.D. is a journalism educator and the chairwoman of the Department of Communication at Langston University.

FOI seeks nominations

Nominations are open for FOI Oklahoma's awards recognizing individuals and organizations that promoted the First Amendment and the free flow of information to the public in 2011.

The Ben Blackstock Award is presented to a non-governmental person or organization that has shown a commitment to freedom of information.

The Sunshine Award goes to a public official or governmental body that has shown a commitment to open meetings and open records.

FOI Oklahoma also recognizes an Oklahoman who has promoted education about or protection of the individual rights guaranteed by the First Amendment with its Marian Opala First Amendment Award. The award is named for the late Oklahoma Supreme Court justice, a Polish immigrant who

exemplified a belief in First Amendment rights.

In addition, the organization recognizes those who opposed dissemination of public information with its Black Hole Award.

All four awards will be presented during the Sunshine Week conference March 10 in Oklahoma City. The local conference is in conjunction with national Sunshine Week, March 11-17.

The deadline for nominations for all four awards is Feb. 21. Nominations must include a letter of no more than 250 words justifying why the person or organization is deserving of the award.

Nominations may be made via e-mail to foiawards@gmail.com or mailed to FOI Awards, PO Box 5315, Edmond, OK 73083-5315.

Tierra Media sells weekly Eastword

Tierra Media Group has transferred ownership of Eastword to Tim Farley.

Farley, who has served as editor, will take over as publisher.

Staff member Sara Atkins will remain in her current position.

Eastword was launched as a community newspaper for the area comprised

of Del City, Midwest City, Choctaw, Nicoma Park and Tinker Air Force Base.

Farley plans to keep Eastword's website operating.

Tierra Media Group also publishes the Oklahoma Gazette and OKC Biz.

Elk City Daily News learns the 'silly sell'

On Nov. 4, The Elk City Daily News hosted a talk on "Humor in Advertising: Revealing the Secrets of the Silly Sell" that was open to all publications that print with the Daily News.

The gathering was led by Fred Beard, a professor of advertising in the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Oklahoma.

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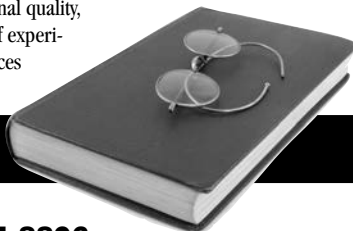
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4. Include name of photographer, name of newspaper, photo cutline and date photo was published.
5. All entries for the previous month must arrive at the OPA office by the 15th of the month. Winners will receive \$100, a Certificate of Achievement and the photo will be published in The Oklahoma Publisher. Sweepstakes winners will receive \$250, a plaque and have the photo published in The Publisher.

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Oklahoma ball carrier Trey Franks loses the ball after being upended by Baylor defenders.

Photo by JERRY LAIZURE, *The Norman Transcript*, November 20, 2011



A structure fire destroyed a home in Farris on Nov. 14. The home on South Farris Road was unoccupied, according to the Farris Fire Department. The cause of the fire, which started at the north end of the residence, is undetermined. The home was a total loss.

Photo by JOE McCLOUR, *Atoka County Times*, November 16, 2011



WITH ALL YOUR POWER



WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

State policy allows for sale of private information



Legal Notes

by Michael Minnis
OPA Attorney

During the recent litigation over access to public employee birth dates and employee identification numbers (EINs), those requesting the information from the government pointed out that the information sought to be classified as "private" was being sold in bulk to private parties.

This argument, as well as many others, was rejected by the District Court and eventually the Oklahoma Supreme Court. Release of public employee birth dates and EINs was declared to

be a "clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy."

Nevertheless, the paradoxical policy remains difficult to justify: Why should the state deny private citizens access to personal identifying information about their public employees when the state is selling similar information about private citizens to private companies?

The Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals recently construed the Driver's Privacy Protection Act (DPPA). This act is Senator Barbara Box's hysterical reaction to a stalker-murder where the stalker obtained the victim's address from a private detective.

The DPPA has at least 14 specific exemptions, including one for private detectives.

The Eighth Circuit decision concerned Missouri's practice of selling personal information from the driving records of citizens in bulk to third parties, although the DPPA prohibits release of such information to individual private citizens.

Those claiming that the sale violated the DPPA were upset that the bulk purchasers of the personal identifying information were reselling it.

The Court noted that the "proper focus of courts is not the manner in which the information was acquired, but the use to which it is eventually put."

This is a rationale that could easily apply to individual private citizens seeking such information.

The Court held that "bulk obtainment of driver information for a permissible purpose does not violate the DPPA" and further opined that "so long as personal information is ultimately used for permitted purposes, it is not clear why Congress would have intended to regulate who could obtain it."

Thus, the state can make money off of the personal identifiers of private citizens without apparently engaging in a "clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy," but, in Oklahoma, a private citizen cannot obtain personal identifying information about its own employees because that would be a "clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy."

Get set for Gridiron show at Lyric Theatre in February

Rehearsals for the 2012 Oklahoma City Gridiron Show have been going on since Sunday, Jan. 8.

This year's show, titled "Washington is Cookin' Our Goose or How Many Nuts are in an Occu-Pie," will be a crowd pleaser.

As an "equal opportunity offender," the Oklahoma City Gridiron Club takes a unique look at the politicians and newsmakers of today.

Performances are set for Feb. 22, 24 and 25 at the Lyric Theatre at 1727 NW 16th St. in Oklahoma City.

Tickets, which are \$30 per seat, may

be purchased online at ticketstorm.com.

The Oklahoma City Gridiron Club has performed its annual political satire since 1928.

The show serves as the main fundraising activity for the club. Show proceeds benefit OKC Gridiron Foundation Scholarships, which are awarded annually to deserving journalism students attending colleges and universities across Oklahoma.

Club members are actively engaged in newspaper, radio or television work.

New rates take effect on Jan. 22



Postal Notes

by Bill Newell
OPA Postal consultant
bnewell@okpress.com

New postage rates go into effect Jan. 22, 2012.

A first-class letter goes from 44 cents to 45 cents and periodicals will see an increase averaging 2.1 percent.

In addition, a new postage statement will need to be used for those who prepare their postage statement manually. The new form is available on the OPA website at OkPress.com/postal-resources (see [Jan2012Postal-form3541.pdf](#)).

Those that use software programs to generate postal reports need to make sure the program is updated before generating a report for mailing entered into the system on or after Jan. 22.

5-DAY DELIVERY/ POST OFFICE CLOSINGS

The postal service is delaying their attempt to go to five days per week delivery until the latter part of this year. This is a result of testimony by the National Newspaper Association and others to the Postal Regulatory Commission and the Commission's response to the USPS. The post office also has been pressured to slow down their action to close or consolidate post offices and to re-evaluate their criteria in consideration of closings.

EXCEPTIONAL DISPATCH

The post office has stated it will continue to allow Exceptional Dispatch and same day delivery if it goes through with the proposed change in service commitments and no longer provides overnight delivery for first class mail.

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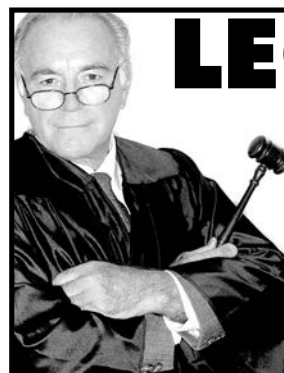
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New year's resolution: Take control of passwords



Computer Notes

from the road
by Wilma Melot
wmelot@okpress.com

Let's look at some ideas for the new year's resolutions of the computer world.

There's my normal ones, like backup the computers – all of them. I'll get into that later. But I thought of a few new ideas that might make the new year a little safer for your computer of choice.

One thing that comes to mind from a tech point of view is to get a handle on all those passwords stored in the minds of employees or lost to cyberspace many moons ago.

I'm a firm believer in the little black book that holds the phone numbers of everyone you know. Another use for that little black book is to write down – in ink – all the passwords that the computer needs to get to every website, or to log onto the computer, or to get to your cell phone provider's website.

Now that you have your passwords all corralled in one place, see if they need to be improved. It's dangerous to use the same password for everything. Even a similar password is easy for a hacker to guess. How about coming up with three good passwords and using them for every site and computer? Now you only have three choices no matter where you use them.

A strong password is hard to guess but easy to remember. Not all websites allow symbols in the password scheme, so make one of those three passwords without a symbol.

Then, once or twice a year change those passwords to three new ones. Keep a record in paper format of all the ones previously used.

If you put your passwords in a spreadsheet, be sure to protect it with a complicated password that's at least 10 characters and uses upper and lower case as well as symbols. And don't name the spreadsheet file "password." Give it a unique name of its own.

A good password, as described above, will be hard – but not impossible – to crack.

Organizing your passwords will make your life easier. If you know where all your passwords are and what

websites use them, you can quickly get to where you want to go.

If you do nothing else with passwords, at least make sure the wireless password at your office is a good one.

Now let's make a little computer cleanup "to do" list. Let's start on the outside and work our way inside.

1. Gently clean the screen with a micro fiber cloth. Clean any outside vents until they are free from dust and lint.
2. Clean the keyboard (unplug it first or take the batteries out of a wireless one) using rubbing alcohol or dish soap on a lint-free cloth. Make sure to squeeze out all the liquid so the cloth is just damp. Wipe over the keys until they are clean, making sure no liquid goes under the keys. If using dish soap, wipe off the keys with plain water. When the keyboard is completely dry, plug it back into the computer.
3. Check to make sure all drives in the building are working well by running disk utility on them once a year.
4. Clean off your desktop. A desktop with files all over it can slow down the computer.

To clean your desktop, make a folder to dump desktop files into on the first level of the hard drive or in the documents folder. Then create a shortcut on the desktop for easy access. (To create a shortcut, right click [control click on older Macs], go to 'Make Alias' and move the alias to the desktop.) Now all you see on your desktop are connected servers, the dump folder you created and maybe a flash card or jump drive.

5. Show every person in the office how to empty the trash and remind them to do it every once in a while. I often find hard drives that are completely full because the employee did not know how to empty the trash. Putting things in the trash does not remove them from the drive.

Before emptying the trash, make sure it hasn't been used as storage for files that might need to be retrieved later. Put those files in the dump folder you created.

To empty the trash, right click (or



- control click) on the trash can and choose 'Empty Trash.' On PCs, right click on the recycle bin and select 'Empty Recycle Bin.'
6. Perform basic maintenance on all computers. Run 'Disk Cleanup' and defrag the hard drive on PCs. On Macs, run the Disk Utility or Disk Warrior.

SYNCING CALENDARS

An online calendar that you can check from a phone, tablet or computer and even share with co-workers is a great idea.

Many online email providers offer this service. But if you're trying to coordinate with Androids and iPhones, two calendars work best.

Apple's cloud now takes the calendar and syncs it with your tablet and phone. If you have an Apple computer as the base unit all is well, but if you want to sync a PC computer, you need a copy of Outlook.

To sync the calendar, you need OS5 on all devices, iPhones and iPads. Then simply follow Apple's instructions found at apple.com/icloud/get-started/.

To set up a calendar on your Android phone, use a Google account. Just be aware that the account may be spammed by apps you download. The Google calendar is easy to set up and use. For instructions on collaborating with work calendars, start by going to google.com/apps/intl/en/business/calendar.html#utm_medium=et&utm_source=calendar-en&utm_campaign=crossnav.

You can make Google business calendars work with Macs by using iCal and Google Sync for the iPhone and iPad. You'll also need a program on the PCs to sync Outlook in both directions, available for \$5 per user per year. In addition, both Google and Apple require a copy of Outlook for PC computers.

ADDING PAGES IN ACROBAT

There's a better way to create a multi-page document with Acrobat Professional.

Rather than simply inserting a page (under Document), try this:

1. Choose **File > Create PDF > From Multiple Files**.
 2. In the next window choose to **Add Files** and pick all the pages to be combined in the document from the finder window that pops up.
 3. After the pages come in, you have the ability to move them up or down in the list to arrange them as desired.
 4. In Acrobat 8 and up you can select **Smaller File Size** right in this window. This is a good choice if you plan to put the file on the Web or email it. When done, click **Next**.
 5. Newer versions of Acrobat will ask one more time to **merge** or **package** the files. For example, choose **Merging files into a single PDF**, click **Create** and your new PDF is created.
 6. The program will want you to save it. Change the name from **Binder1** to the name to be mailed and **Save**.
- Now the PDF is displayed on the screen. This is a streamlined way to go from press quality PDFs to Web PDFs.

DISK UTILITY

If your Macintosh is slow to startup, try running the Disk Utility.

To find it, follow this path: **hard drive > Applications folder > Utilities folder**.

Choose the icon on the left making sure it says **Disk First Aid** on the top and then click **Repair Disk Permissions**. As far as I can tell, verify disk permissions does nothing so just run the repair.

Don't worry if it finds lots of errors – it will fix what it can. Close out when done and see if the finder runs better.

If you have an older Mac that has never been indexed, it may be slow finding files. To index it, follow this path: **hard drive > File > Get info** and then look for indexing.

OPA Computer Consultant Wilma Melot's column is brought to you by the Oklahoma Advertising Network (OAN). For more information on the OAN program, contact Oklahoma Press Service at (405) 499-0020.

Get to the point quickly to keep readers



Clark's Critique

by Terry Clark
Journalism Professor,
University of Central Oklahoma
TClark@uco.edu

You do want them to read them, don't you?

I'm talking about the stories you write for your paper. You're leading off a new year, and it's a good time to think about all those stories you're going to write this year.

Sure, most of them are going to be routine, but that doesn't mean they have to be boring. I know you're too busy to waste time, so why bother writing something other busy people won't read because it doesn't get to the point?

I usually have one test for effective lead sentences in news and feature stories – "Would you keep reading?". Here are some pointers.

1. Go for the drama – the one thing that will affect most of the readers.

2. Chose a specific noun, and action verb when necessary.

3. Keep the first sentence short – the bare essentials, in less than 20 words. Usually answer who and what first, then when and where – unless when and where are most important. Save the "heavy cargo" (titles, large numbers, official stuff, quotes, etc.) for later.

4. Paragraph as soon as you're through.

Here are some good examples:

• "In the beginning, God created the heavens and earth." ~Moses. Put time first, because it's the most important. Also answered who, what, where. Spent the rest of the book answering why and how.

• "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death..." ~David. Talk about a great hook.

• "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." ~Charles Dickens. Summary lead at its best, for last year's wrap up.

• "When lilacs last in the doorway bloomed, and the great star early drooped..." ~Whitman. Same structure as number one, but more poetic.

• "Dead. That's what the man was the police found in an alleyway yes-



Two notable fronts this month come from the Pawhuska Journal-Capital and The Ardmoreite. Year-end wrap-up stories dominated headlines in many papers across the state like the The Hominy News-Progress and Cherokee Messenger & Republican. Big photos ran on the front of the Oologah Lake Leader, and the South County Leader, the successor to the Jenks Journal, Bixby Bulletin and Glenpool Post, made its debut this month (both on facing page).

terday." ~James Thurber. Go for the drama.

• "The last camel died at noon." ~Ken Follet. Would you keep reading? Get the point?

LOOKIN'EM OVER

Strong lead by Carolyn Cole at the *Mustang News* on a potential water problem: "The tap could be turned off for Mustang's main source of drinking water if a proposed state standard takes effect."

Jerry Benson at the *Lone Grove Ledger* writes with humor: "The Carter County Election Board has resurrected the cemetery voting precinct. / Precinct #39, which has represented the Keller Cemetery electorate, hasn't had a lot of activity, voter-wise, for the past several years. / But it could be a lively place in the future. / Due to redistricting..."

Liz Golliver of the *Lincoln County News* started a feature: "It's a quiet fall morning. Hunters sit in a deer stand awaiting the sight of the ideal buck to cross their path. Soon a monstrous 21-point buck starts heading their way. The hunters get a shot and miss. The

perfect deer leaves their sight. The hunters may never see this magnificent buck again, but one Wellston man breeds these trophy deer."

At the *Enid News & Eagle*, Phyllis Zorn began: "It's not always easy to figure out what – or who – caused a fire, but when the answer is not easy to see, it's a fire marshal's job to figure it out."

'Tis the season for end-of-year wrap-up stories, and too many papers just filled up the pages with long columns of unparagraphed, gray copy that nobody would read. A better alternative for an easy page shows up at the *Hominy News-Progress* – a full page of local pix from last year.

At least add some local photos and rank the stories, as Peggy Keifer did at the *Grove Sun*, Jeff Shultz at the *Garvin County News Star*, the *Carnegie Herald* and Steve Booher at the *Cherokee Messenger & Republican*.

More stories are needed on the new voting machines. Best jobs I saw were in the *Cordell Beacon* with photo of the election board secretary, the *Guymon Daily Herald* by Miranda Fleming and in the *Okmulgee Daily Times*.

Another story everyone should be

on top of is courthouse security. Lucinda Gray at the *Pawhuska Capital-Journal* did a super job, as did Jim Fienup at the *Spiro Graphic*.

Is cursive writing disappearing because of computers? Jennifer Lindsey at *The Ardmoreite* did a super job covering the story. Karen West at the *Stigler News-Sentinel* covered holiday depression.

Online sexual predators? Jim Powell of the *Yukon Review* wrote one every paper could localize: "EL RENO – Although the burgeoning growth of computer technology over the past few decades has done a world of good in many instances, it has also unleashed a flood of evil that stalks our kids and grandkids. / The 'new frontier' of crime is cyberspace, where anonymity hides criminals who target..."

Two business stories should be on several to-do lists. The oil and gas industry boom is the broadest. Rex Hogan at the *El Reno Tribune* zeroed in on it. At the *Sapulpa Daily Herald*, John Brock wrote about the effects of a potential American Airlines bankruptcy.

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Clark's Critique Continued from Page 14



And to start the New Year off on the wild side, Tim Schnobelen at the *Mooreland Leader* wrote about mountain lions in the area.

HEAD'EM UP AWARDS.

First place, *Poteau Daily News*, on a Kim Ross story about a woman, last name of High, arrested:

Mail-order marijuana Leads to High arrest

Second place, tie, *The Journal Record*, on a D. Ray Tuttle story about Boeing leaving Wichita and coming to Oklahoma City:

Clipping Wichita's wings



and *El Reno Tribune* on Rex Hogan's story:

Energy industry revs up El Reno's engine

Third place, *The Oklahoman* on OSU's Fiesta Bowl victory where field goals made the difference:

A LEG UP.

Honorable mentions: *Mustang News*, on Cole's water story, "Lurking in the water," and on a Traci Chapman story about a county commission meeting, "Hiccup forces late meeting"; *Enid News & Eagle*, on Zorn's story, "Making the call"; *Muskogee Phoenix*, on Elizabeth Ridenour's story on a killer confessing to a crime, "A killer's conscience"; *Yukon Review*, on Powell's story, "To catch a Predator..."; *McAlester News-Capital* on a Jeanne LeFlore story about a hometown boy becoming commanding officer on a Navy destroyer, "UNDERWAY"; *Lone Grove Ledger*, on Benson's story, "Amen and Hallelujah."

Duncan Banner names new sports editor

The Duncan Banner has a new sports editor.

Greg Crews, a journalism graduate of the University of Kentucky, was named sports editor of the Banner and its website, duncanbanner.com.

Crews comes to Duncan from Guymon where he has been sports editor of The Daily Herald since October 2010.

"Greg is a great addition to our staff," said Jeff Kaley, managing editor of The Banner.

"He is a gifted young professional who brings a love for and knowledge of the sports world to Duncan."

Crews has won sports writing awards from the Kentucky Press Association and Landmark Community Newspapers.

"I'm excited about the opportunity here," Crews said. "I believe the transition will be a smooth one."

Crews is a six-year veteran of the industry. Prior to his role in Guymon, he was a sports writer for several newspapers in Kentucky.

Crews served internships for Sports Illustrated On Campus and at Georgetown.

The wrong way to stop piracy



That InterWeb Thing

by Keith Burgin
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Anytime someone mentions online piracy, I think of Oliver Wendall Jones.

Jones, for those not familiar with the name, was a character in Berkeley Breathed's Bloom County – a young computer hacker who fancied himself a bit of a digital swashbuckler.

My fondest memories of Jones involved him dressed in full pirate regalia, including jaunty eye patch and wooden saber. He is standing on his office chair, facing his computer monitor, screaming, "Avast ye land lubbers!" before crashing the servers at the IRS.

Real online piracy was never so amusing nor was it as well-intentioned as Jones' efforts often were. And today, online piracy is just big business; it is the business of intellectual property theft on the grandest scale imaginable.

Modern online pirates, as defined by the federal government, sell bootleg DVDs, fake shoes, fake drugs, real drugs and products that make claims you would only believe if you were taking drugs. Pirates steal copyrighted content from television, the music industry, magazines and newspapers.

There's no question that something needs to be done about it – it's a serious problem.

The House of Representatives believe they have the solution with the Stop Online Piracy Act (HR3261). I'm not so certain.

SOPA and its brother in the Senate, PIPA, are designed to strengthen the government's power to block, cripple or seize sites suspected of copyright infringement or dealing in counterfeit goods.

You can read up all day on the reasons Facebook, Google, et al oppose this legislation – a lot of it has to do with the technical nature of the Web and the onus placed on service providers to police an incredible amount of user-uploaded content.

As for me, I believe these efforts

are far too vague in language and too broad in the power they grant the authorities.

Both SOPA and PIPA allow the feds to take action against a website owner or the website itself without trial or conviction. All that's needed is "probable cause" to get court orders to halt income, block a site from search engines, shut the site down completely and/or seize the domain name.

Charges can be submitted by private parties, watchdog groups, companies, law enforcement – just about anyone who feels "injured."

If authorities can't find the owner of the site through public records (and many domains are registered through privacy services) they can take action directly against the website. The owner won't even have the opportunity to defend himself before the entire business is gone.

In the case of a mistake, neither the federal government nor the services that voluntarily cooperate with them are liable for any damages. That's written right into the law.

Further, the law punishes those who "enable" infringing sites. That's so vague it's laughable.

If you post a video on your website or link to a story or display an advertisement and the folks on the other end of that content are infringing on someone else's rights, you're guilty, too. That's how broad these bills are.

Long and short of it is, these bills allow the Attorney General to act based on accusation and little evidence. The accused are forced to fight in court to prove their innocence while the AG plays "Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon" to track down anyone who "enabled" the seized site.

I wish I knew how to effectively stop online theft of content. "Cease and desist" letters are even less effective than in the past. Everyone is losing a lot of money and not to children in plastic eye patches.

Broad, unilateral power, though, is never good – especially in the hands of government. It's certainly no solution and will probably cause a bigger problem in a wholly different way.

SCOUTING REPORT 6

Join OPA President Rusty Ferguson on his visits to OPA member newspapers

BY RUSTY FERGUSON, OPA President

"I still have a lot of fun," said *Shawnee News-Star* publisher Brian Blansett when asked about the motivating factor that keeps him interested in the newspaper business.

Fellow publisher Loné Beasley, about 50 miles south, feels the same way about going to work at the *Ada News* for the past 13 years. "I love this business. I really like the fact that no two days are the same," said Beasley, whose newspaper advertising and publishing career has taken him to such places as New Orleans, Texas, New Mexico and Enid, Okla.

Similar expressions concerning their jobs at the helm of an Oklahoma newspaper were heard at each stop OPA Executive Vice President Mark Thomas and I made on our most recent road trip, Jan. 12 and 13, with stops in Meeker, Shawnee, Tecumseh, Ada, Holdenville and Seminole.

"People tell me, 'Don't ever stop doing this for us,'" said Carol Jenkins, publisher and editor of the *The Meeker News*. Jenkins, who has owned and operated the newspaper in the Lincoln County community for the past 11 years and worked for the previous owners an additional eight years, said she enjoys the weekly challenge of publishing a newspaper, but has her "reality check" moments concerning the economic climate of her small town. "But, I have to ask myself, if I didn't do this, who else would cover the news of Meeker?"

It would likely be an understatement to say that Holdenville publisher Bill Robinson enjoys his job. "I flat love getting up and doing this every day," said Robinson, who, with wife Dayna, publishes the *Holdenville Tribune*. They also own the *Allen Advocate* and the *Coalgate Record Register*.

In Tecumseh, the prize-winning husband and wife team of Wayne and Gloria Trotter also find it gratifying that they have been able to offer their community quality news coverage since

1983. "There's no question - this is what we were meant to do," said Gloria of a career in the news business.

Because of *The Countywide & Sun*, "we've been able to have a great influence on our community," Wayne Trotter said. One of the best ways to spread such influence is through a well written editorial, and in that field, Trotter is the leader of the pack. Scores of plaques awarded for his editorial writing ability adorn the news office wall attesting to his abilities.

Trotter shared a bit of his "theory" towards strong-hitting editorials. He said it's important to build up credits, so to speak, by printing many good things and praising cities, schools, efforts of political officials, etc. "And

I don't mean we have to make up this good news, you just need to look for it, be aware of it and share it with your readers. So, when it comes time to be critical, you can cash in some of those credits," he said.

In Seminole, it has been three generations of strong influence shared from the pages of the *Seminole Producer*. Today, Stu Phillips can't go to work without driving on or crossing Milt Phillips Boulevard, a busy street named in honor of his grandfather. OPA also recognized the contributions of the elder Phillips with the establishment of the H. Milt Phillips Award in 1978. The award is the highest honor given by the press association to recognize those who give the same quality of service to family, community, country and newspapers as did H. Milt Phillips.

Stu Phillips began working at the newspaper as a child, learning to clean the press, then moving on to photography as a teenager under the watchful eye of his own father, Ted. After college he came home and became circulation manager, until eventually partnering with his father and then taking the paper over when his dad retired. The Phillips family has been in the newspa-

per business since 1899 when Milt Phillips' uncle published a Norman, Okla., newspaper.

"I think my granddad would be proud of the business we've managed to continue all of these years," Phillips said, adding that he wasn't sure that his granddad would enjoy the digital revolution the industry is experiencing.

For the most part, every newspaper we visit on our ongoing journey across the state seems to be embracing that digital world, from websites to Facebook, Twitter and E-editions.

KEEPING NEWS LOCAL

In Ada, Beasley and *Ada News* editor Gene Lehmann are working to offer their readers a quality product both in print and on the Internet. "We get a bunch of traffic," Beasley said of the *News'* website. They also offer readers an E-edition option. However, be it in newsprint or via the computer, Lehmann said the most important thing is to offer local news.

"We strive for 100 percent local. When someone picks up the *Ada News* they want to see Ada news on the front

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Carol Jenkins, publisher of the *The Meeker News*, in front of the newspaper office, which was near the epicenter of the November 2011 earthquake. Jenkins, who likes to be prepared, now keeps an earthquake emergency kit by her front door.

SCOUTING REPORT 6

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page,” Lehmann said, noting that any general news from the state or national level lands inside, unless it is of great importance.

Blansett has the same philosophy in Shawnee about the pages of the *News-Star*. “We’ve made a lot of changes,” said Blansett, who is in his fourth year as publisher in Shawnee (following a career that began in Stratford and then led to editor jobs in Ada, Sulphur, Ardmore and Waco, then a few years in Oklahoma City in the Internet news business and, most recently, as OPA’s advertising manager).

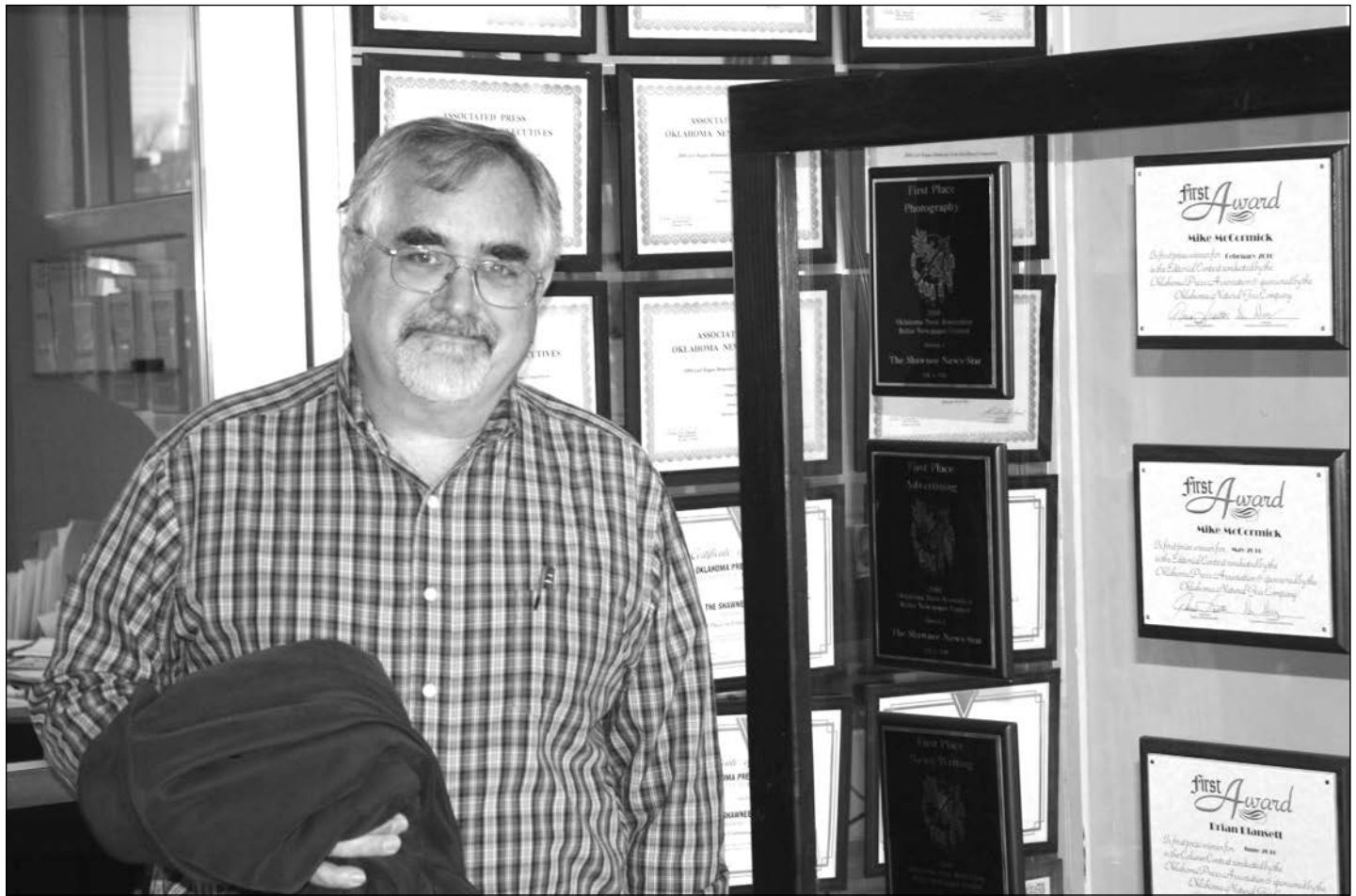
“We use very few wire stories. With the Internet, smart phones and iPads people have seen all the late-breaking big news stories from other sources. You could say we’re a weekly paper that publishes six days a week,” he said. Also offering readers news digitally, including an E-edition, Blansett acknowledged that the *News-Star*’s website gets thousands of unique hits each day.

The Trotters of Tecumseh are well versed in using their weekly publication to provide the local news the readers want. “I remember when we first moved out here [from North Carolina], people back home didn’t think we’d have anything to report in a small town,” Gloria Trotter said with a laugh. “That’s never been a problem. The first week we were here we covered a murder, and the next week a big flood hit.”

Wayne Trotter said he gets a little tickled when generic news is passed on to him as a filler-type story to be used when space is available. “We’ve just never had the problem of not having enough local news to fill our pages,” he said.

Trotter has a stellar resume of bold reporting and editorial writing with a stint as urban affairs editor for a Memphis, Tenn., 200,000 circulation daily among a varied list of impressive credentials. However, he said making the switch to writing for his own weekly newspaper was not as big of change as some might expect.

“There is no difference in how you gather news. You go about doing it the same way whether you’re working for a daily or a weekly,” he said. The *Countywide & Sun* has also embraced all the popular forms of offering its news digitally.



Keeping coverage local, Brian Blansett, publisher of the Shawnee News-Star, says the News-Star could be referred to as a weekly newspaper that publishes six days a week.

ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

When it comes to gathering that news, Lehmann, who has been editor at the *Ada News* for five months now, returning to Oklahoma by way of Texas after a career that began 30 years ago in northeast Oklahoma, says he makes sure that each front page has a “good, warm and fuzzy” story added to the mix of everything else.

“It’s important to me that there’s a positive element in every issue...something to make the reader feel good,” Lehmann said.

In Holdenville, where there are two newspapers, Robinson described the *Tribune* as “a ‘good news’ newspaper.” He said their focus is on people and families. “I love human interest stories. I just love people – everyone has an interesting story to tell. When I get a call to go to a family reunion or some kind of party, I look forward to it. There are many days when I’m with people that I don’t even feel like I’ve been at work,” he said. The Robinsons are currently working on upgrading their website.

In Meeker, Jenkins is pretty much the Lone Ranger in gathering both

news and advertisements. She is assisted by her husband, David, a fireman who is a willing photographer, and her mother, who helps with typesetting. However, some days feel a little more like “work” than others.

“I close the office on Fridays and go out and sell ads...and let’s just say it’s not my favorite part of the job,” she said. Because sources for ads are limited in Meeker, Jenkins promotes her newspaper in nearby Shawnee. Her routine was shaken up a little this past year when the earthquakes felt across Oklahoma originated just a few miles from her Meeker office. “I won’t ever forget that feeling...or that noise,” Jenkins said of the earthquake, noting about a dozen Meeker area homes were left irreparable by the quakes. One who wants to be prepared for emergencies, Jenkins now keeps an earthquake emergency kit ready to go by her front door.

Phillips said the *Producer* also benefits from Shawnee business. “Actually, our location lends itself to selling in two other trade zones other than our own – Shawnee and Ada.” While describing his hometown as economically “doing

great,” he said his sales staff has seen success in securing advertising clients in the other communities that draw from the Seminole customer base.

The Trotters also have a vested interest in Shawnee. After purchasing the *Tecumseh Countywide News* (which was founded in 1927), they started a second paper in 1990, *The Shawnee Sun*. They combined the newspapers into one publication in 2008. Now, each issue has news and advertising from both communities. Two annual special editions, “Tecumseh Today” and “Shawnee Spirit”, promote the respective benefits of the neighboring communities.

The *Ada News* staff meeting room clearly indicates that long range planning is a key to success. Beasley explained that the strategically placed push-pinned cards and signs on the wall-length bulletin board was the year’s marketing strategy, planned out by the month by the paper’s advertising sales team. In addition to the newspaper and website, sales efforts will include a number of special editions, promotions, niche publications including *Ada*

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SCOUTING REPORT 6

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Magazine and a classified advertising buyer's guide that targets south central Oklahoma.

KEEPING CONNECTED

Blansett said it's important that the staff of the *Shawnee News-Star* "connects" with the community and his staff is charged to be involved in the civic affairs. A large trophy near the front desk of the office proves they do that in a number of ways, such as winning the float contest in the recent Christmas parade. A variety of niche publications also seek ways to make the connection including a monthly "Family" tab, a college survival guide and a salute to the community's military heroes. And a page one column offers thoughts, not from the editor, but from a variety of staff members (including page designers and sports writers), used on a rotating basis as a unique connecting-to-the-readers tool.

It was apparent while in Holdenville, that the Robinsons, too, know a few things about "connecting" with the public. From a homemade pecan pie being delivered fresh from a reader's oven to the *Tribune's* office, to the countless "hello's" and hugs distributed during a tasty lunch at Pat's Cafe, it was clear both Bill and Dayna Robinson have made many friends in the town where Bill grew up. At the age of 18, Bill was elected to the town council and was mayor of Holdenville at age 21. He followed that up with eight years in the Oklahoma Legislature. Robinson joined his father in the dry cleaning business before deciding to divert his attention to newspapers, prying Dayna away from her government job – complete with perks and benefits – to a varied life of uncertain self-employment. Having purchased and sold several business entities, the Robinsons' current business, in addition to their three newspapers, includes a print shop (where Dayna is the chief printer), copy shop and, returning to his roots, a dry cleaning drop off station.

However, it's the news business that really gets Bill's juices flowing. He said, "I tell all my employees, week by week, we are making the only history book this place will ever have. If newspapers don't do it, who will?"

Conversing with Beasley and Lehmann in Ada was a refreshing remind-

er of just how in touch a newspaper should be with its community. Not only could both men readily comment on the town's business climate, including the impressive downtown district, but they each rattled off numerous remarks about various community assets from a corporate friendly Chickasaw Nation to impressive healthcare systems and top employers, delivered with enough authority to make any chamber of com-

merce or economic development executive proud.

Each news office we visit is unique in and of itself. A few will have photos from past issues proudly displayed, or historic front pages framed. Others find clever ways to use newsprint in their decor or unique methods to post rates and prices at the front counter. Each stop also had something "extra" that peeked my interest, such as:

- In Meeker, like nearly every news office I have visited, there is a wall attesting to the involvement of the newspaper and/or its publisher and editor in that community. Carol Jenkins is no different. She has been citizen of the year, commended by coaches for having the "Spirit of the Bulldog" and named a "Partner in Education." But, most interesting,

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Award-winning publishers Wayne and Gloria Trotter stand in front of a wall adorned with awards Wayne won for his editorial writing. The Trotters are publishers of *The Countywide & Sun* in Tecumseh.



Whether it's in print or on the Internet, *Ada News* editor Gene Lehmann, left, and publisher Loné Beasley keep the news local. Lehmann and Beasley are in touch with their community and know what's going on.

SCOUTING REPORT 6

Continued from page 18

- was a letter she had framed from the police chief who had, apparently, lost his cool with Jenkins. The letter, written at the authority of the town council, apologized for his actions and promised to work with her for the good of the town!
- In Tecumseh, Gloria Trotter is waiting for her dinner invitation to the governor's mansion. I'm certain it is just a matter of time. The Trotters have watched – and supported – as an unusually large number of citizens of Pottawatomie County have climbed the ladder of success in government, including their personal friend Gov. Mary Fallin (from Tecumseh) and former Gov. Brad Henry (from Shawnee). "Getting to know the people who represent us has been fun and we've gotten to know most of them pretty well."
 - In Seminole, when Stu Phillips recently became ill and was out of the office for over a month, wife Cheryl stepped up and took charge. She had formerly worked in the bookkeeping department at the *Producer*, but had since followed her own interest, until needed back at the newspaper. Today, Stu is doing well – and so is the news department under Cheryl's continued leadership as managing editor!
 - Ada is an impressive, thriving community. Publisher Loné Beasley told of a group of citizens who banned together to make a difference. They became known as the "25,000 Club" as the group was formed when Ada's population was 5,000 and they were determined to see their city grow to a population of 25,000. These citizens were not after anything for

themselves, but gave selflessly for the community. Today, Ada's population is in excess of 16,000, well on its way to the club's goal!

- Bill and Dayna Robinson make no secret of where their inner joy springs from – it's their Christian faith. Bill's father was their pastor for years. Not long ago, their church in Holdenville combined with the neighboring Nazarene church to double their membership. Today, the membership has again doubled, thanks, in part, to the hard work of their new pastor. And guess who that pastor is? Bill and Dayna's son!
- From all the stories we heard on our latest road trip, Brian Blansett in Shawnee had, perhaps, the best of all! Recently, a longtime *News-Star* subscriber of more than 50 years passed away. Following his own directions, upon his death, he wanted a copy of the *Shawnee News-Star* delivered to his casket the day of his funeral by the *News-Star's* circulation manager. This allowed the man-at-rest to have his hands crossed on his chest with his remote control in one hand and the current edition of the *News-Star* in his other!

Busy, busy, busy! Newspaper people remain very busy both at work and for the community. Since meeting Stu and Cheryl Phillips years ago, they have reminded me by their actions that we all need to take time to slow down and enjoy life outside the walls of our news office. I asked Stu about his ability to balance work with pleasure. He said, "You know what they say, we've never seen a headstone at the cemetery that said 'I wish I had worked a few more days!'...we all know it's important to work hard, but life's too short not to find time to enjoy it as well!"



Bill and Dayna Robinson find good news to publish in the three publications they own and publish – the Holdenville Tribune, Allen Advocate and Coalgate Record-Register.



Stu Phillips is a third generation publisher at the Seminole Producer. His wife, Cheryl, serves as managing editor.

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The Journal Record

NOVEMBER 2011 COLUMN WINNER **ANN McDONALD, THE COUNTYWIDE & SUN**

About rules and responsibility

Last week we experienced the worst behavior imaginable from the sports world as well as some good stuff from others involved in athletics.

We can't ignore the horrible situation at Penn State University. It's everywhere, on the sports page to the news to the internet to the local coffee shop. No question that more is yet to come out. What we do know is that a man has been arrested for molesting several young boys. And because there seemed to be a cover-up, several high profile men lost their jobs.

Love him or hate him, Joe Paterno has been implicated as part of the mess if for no other reason than the alleged criminal was a friend and employee. The story of this man who had coached at the same school for 46 years has polarized the country, even among those who have no interest in college football. Even if he's ultimately exonerated from any sort of serious involvement, the man has lost his "legend" status and will likely only be remembered by some for this event.

It's about rules, and it appears many were broken along the way. The boys who were involved are robbed of their innocence. The assistant coaches as well as the athletic director, college officials all the way up to the school's president, the president of what was probably a fine youth organization, and possibly

even some lawmakers and a judge, are taking serious hits. Yet the man who allegedly broke these rules of common decency denied earlier this week that he was as bad as he was being made out to be. Another one of those "I made some bad choices" excuses.

There's another case about rules being broken. This one's closer to home. A couple of weeks ago it was announced that Guthrie High School was found to have used an ineligible player and was being forced to forfeit all the games the boy had played in. For many schools across the state that might not mean much, but the Blue Jays were undefeated and picked by many to win the Class 5A state championship.

The rule this boy broke declared that if a student moves from one district to another, certain papers have to be filled out stating it was a legal move, not something just to facilitate the youngster's moving into a better athletic opportunity.

Years ago that was a real problem. Many boys I knew suddenly showed up in a new school and not only enhanced their new teams but their chances at college scholarships. But it was abused and it wasn't fair, so the OSSAA began implementing rules about transfers and moves.

The mother of this boy was a teacher at one of the Guthrie schools and the family decided to move there from Prague. They bought a house,

put their old one up for sale last winter and this fall he went out for football. Trouble was, their old house never sold and they let an older brother live in it while he worked in Shawnee. That makes it appear "legally" that they were maintaining two residences. That's against the rules.

The player and his team were devastated. Nobody had intended to break the rules.

The OSSAA met last week and said the ruling had to stand, that they had to enforce the rules. Then they met again to listen to the Blue Jays' longtime coach. He said it was all his fault, that he simply hadn't taken care of the proper paperwork. He begged the governing body to punish him and not the players.

The OSSAA listened, considered, re-voted and agreed with the coach. The rule breaker should be punished and not the innocent. So Guthrie got to play in the playoffs (and won big time!) while their coach sat in the stands. He must have been very proud of his players for "sucking it up" as they say, and playing through the adversity. The players must have been very proud of their coach for taking the responsibility. And the OSSAA board members must be sleeping well for doing the right thing.

Doesn't it make you wish everybody would take responsibility for their actions?



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